

WILSON URGED TO INVESTIGATE WHEAT SUPPLY

Agriculture Dept. Confessed
Ignorance, Says Mrs.
Heath.

BAKERS DENY PLOT TO RAISE PRICES

President Wilson will receive in his mail this morning a letter from Mrs. Julian Heath, president of the National Housewives League, telling him that the Federal Department of Agriculture confessed its inability to give him information concerning the wheat supply of the country and urging him to instruct the Department to investigate the stock of wheat at once "in order that the citizens of the United States may have full knowledge of the quantity of available wheat and where it is now being held."

It is understood that Attorney-General Woodbury's office, which started yesterday an investigation into bread, meat and wheat prices, also asked Secretary Houston ten days ago for figures as to the supply of wheat on hand, but did not get the information. The Department of Agriculture replied, however, that it was investigating along similar lines mapped out for the New York inquiry. In preparing for the inquiry Deputy Attorney-General Alfred Becker, it is said, learned from the New York Produce Exchange that the Federal Department of Agriculture had asked the exchange to furnish it with certain statistics regarding wheat. It is further said that Henry Heinzer and A. L. Russell, statisticians for the exchange, have supplied or are about to supply, Uncle Sam's experts with a report.

Mr. Heinzer and Mr. Russell will be the principal witnesses at today's session of the Attorney-General's inquiry. Mr. Becker says he believes their testimony will have a very important bearing on the things that he is trying to find out, as it will deal with facts concerning the supply and demand of wheat.

Bakers Deny Combination.

Yesterday's session, which lasted over four hours, was confined to bakers and others in a position to know something about the causes which led to the increase in bread prices. One of the chief admissions made by bakers, big and small, was that the price of bread went up practically all along the line on the same day, although all insisted most emphatically that it was not the result of any agreement for concerted action nor the result of a conspiracy or combination. The high cost of flour made the increase necessary, they said, and the price went up by reason of individual orders.

It was admitted last night that reports have reached Deputy Attorney-General Becker that employees of at least one large wholesale baking concern have tried to get together to raise the price of bread. Mr. Becker, however, declared that he had no evidence to support the charge. He charged that where retailers have been known to buy cheaper bread from other bakers' refusals to deliver five-cent bread (which retails at six cents) have forced them to buy at the increased price.

Charges Official Ignorance.

In her letter to President Wilson, Mrs. Heath said she asked the Department of Agriculture the following questions:

"How much of our wheat supply are the producers still holding?"
"How much of our wheat supply is now in the elevators?"

"Is the wheat being shipped to other countries?"

"Are the producers shipping into the country?"

"What percentage of our surplus has already been shipped abroad?"

"She offered a copy of a letter from Carl Vrooman, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, to show that not only was the Department unable to give the information but 'was obliged to refer to the Chicago Daily Trade Bulletin, which seemed to be their only source of information.'"

In his letter to Mrs. Heath, Assistant Secretary Vrooman quoted the Chicago Daily Trade Bulletin of January 14 as saying that the aggregate quantity of wheat on farms on January 1, was about 328,000,000 bushels, as compared with about 319,000,000 bushels one year ago.

He also quoted the Daily Trade Bulletin as reporting the stock of wheat in second hands on January 1 as 116,725,000 bushels, as compared with 98,944,000 on January 1, 1914.

Tells of Flour Advance.

Alfred Romer, vice-president of and manager for the Shultz Bread Company, which conducts twelve bakeries, told Mr. Becker at the afternoon session of the Attorney-General's inquiry that between February 15 and January 14, 1915, his concern bought between 400,000,000 and 500,000,000 bushels of flour. In that time the company, he said, has paid an advance of \$2.25 on wheat flour and \$2.25 on rye flour. Although the Shultz Bread Company advanced the price of a loaf one cent, he said, it has not been able to make a loaf somewhat. He explained that the executive committee of the company passed a resolution on February 5 to raise the price.

Mr. Romer said that when times are hard all bread is utilized, but when times are flush "the garbage pails, it will be noticed, contain loaves of bread."

Harry D. Tipton, auditor for the Shultz Bread Company, figured out the cost of making a loaf of bread with flour at \$6.822, barley at \$9.00, and \$6.50 per barrel \$0.043, at \$7.00, \$0.0525, and at \$8.00, \$0.0575.

No Profit Over \$5.50.

"If flour is over \$5.50 per barrel," he said, "bread cannot be baked at a profit."

W. Herschel Collins, president of the General Baking Company, controlling 100 bakeries in the United States, took it upon himself to raise the price of bread to the company's customers in New York, Detroit, Newark, and Jersey City on Wednesday last. The company also has bakeries in other cities. He said more loaves of stale bread had been returned since the price went up than before.

James B. Arthur, secretary of the Ward Baking Company, which has four bakeries, said that, reduced to a four-cent loaf, the wholesale price to the retailer, his company turned out 127,000 loaves of bread in 1914. A loaf of bread cost the company 4.5 cents and the total payroll, exclusive of the salaries of officers and managers amounted to \$2,465,163.33. Mr. Arthur said that the law was not being observed during President Wilson's term as Governor. Drastic provisions in some of these measures occasioned a flurry in corporation circles at the time, though it was freely predicted the law would be enforced that they would be practically become a dead letter.

Charges that the laws were not being observed have often been made, but in the case of the alleged coal combination and an alleged combination to raise the price of food products, no action has been taken. The Attorney-General undertook an investigation of the rise in the price of food nearly a year ago, but nothing has been heard from his department on the subject.

MME. SEMBRICH IS HONORED AT OPENING OF POLISH RELIEF FUND HEADQUARTERS



Left to right—Mme. S. Adamowska, Mrs. G. H. Montgomery, Herbert L. Satterlee, Mrs. Van Sennier, Mme. Marcella Sembrich, Mrs. H. H. Flagler and Mrs. Herbert L. Satterlee.

The new headquarters of the American Polish Relief Fund were dedicated yesterday afternoon by a reception to Mme. Marcella Sembrich, who is president of the association and who has given the fund the proceeds of several concerts. More than 700 persons were invited, and the rooms, which are at 14 East Forty-seventh street, were filled.

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The witness explained that the members of his association were much disturbed about the high price of flour, but insisted that the organization did not take any action to put up prices.

George W. Perkins, chairman of the Mayor's Food Supply Committee, was the first witness at the morning session. Mr. Perkins read a statement in which he said that the recent drop in one day of five cents per bushel in the price of wheat evidently accelerated buying from Europe and on Saturday the export sales were placed at 1,500,000 bushels.

"The visible supply of wheat," he said, "showed a decrease last week of nearly 2,500,000 bushels, compared with a decrease of 150,000 the same week a year ago."

Mr. Perkins said that the Legislature could do a helpful thing at once by passing a law explicitly stipulating what the weight of bread should be and providing proper penalties for violations.

Weight Law Evaded.

Joseph Hartigan, Commissioner of Weights and Measures, said that bakers have not complied generally with the "net weight law" as to marking the weight of bread. He said that he had received several complaints from bakers' associations, got on the record a statement that the bakers whom he represents are ready to comply with the law as soon as it is interpreted by competent authority.

Commissioner Hartigan announced last night that Deputy Attorney-General Leonard J. Obermeier has been instructed to take charge of the "net weight law" violation cases. Mr. Hartigan's present evidence today in five cases.

WHEAT \$1.65 IN CHICAGO.

President of Western Pitt Willing to Testify Here.

CHICAGO, Feb. 16.—C. H. Canby, president of the Chicago Board of Trade, who has been named to testify in New York whenever needed to testify in the Federal investigation of wheat and flour prices, Mr. Canby said that the proposed embargo on wheat shipments in the opinion of many lawyers, would be unconstitutional.

There was a sharp demand for cash wheat on the Board of Trade and sales were made at \$1.64 1/2 to \$1.65 a bushel. The top price on Monday was \$1.60 1/2. May wheat quickly advanced to \$1.64 1/2 under light offerings. This is 4 1/2 cents higher than Monday's closing level.

WHEAT EMBARGO CONSIDERED.

President Asks Secretary Houston for Data on Food Supply.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—The letter of Mayor Mitchell of New York urging President Wilson to consider an embargo on wheat was taken up at today's Cabinet meeting. The President's chief interest in the proposal centers in its relation to the conservation of our foodstuffs. With a view of informing himself on this subject more fully he requested Secretary of Agriculture Houston to prepare data on the existing supply of foodstuffs.

Congressional action would be necessary before the President could put an embargo on foodstuffs of any kind. It is a measure providing for the exercise of such authority in the President's discretion already has been introduced by Representative Farr of Pennsylvania, though the understanding is that the Administration has no thought of getting behind the measure at this time.

New Jersey Senate Votes for Bread Price Investigation.

TRENTON, N. J., Feb. 17.—Allegations of an illegal combination of dealers to raise the price of bread in violation of the corporation laws of 1913, known as the Seven Sisters, were contained in a resolution introduced by Senator Eagan and adopted by the Senate today. The resolution directs the Attorney-General to undertake an investigation to determine whether or not an illegal combination exists, and if there is one to prosecute immediately the offenders.

Thus far there have been no prosecutions by the State under the corporation laws enacted during President Wilson's term as Governor. Drastic provisions in some of these measures occasioned a flurry in corporation circles at the time, though it was freely predicted the law would be enforced that they would be practically become a dead letter.

Charges that the laws were not being observed have often been made, but in the case of the alleged coal combination and an alleged combination to raise the price of food products, no action has been taken. The Attorney-General undertook an investigation of the rise in the price of food nearly a year ago, but nothing has been heard from his department on the subject.

PREACHER DARNELL HELD ON MANN LAW

"Marrying Parson" Accused by U. S. Officers in Chicago Under White Slave Act.

Chicago, Feb. 16.—The Rev. James Morrison Darnell was arrested here today charged with a violation of the Mann white slave law. Darnell was taken before United States Commissioner Mason and his hearing set for February 16.

He was held in \$2,000 bail.

Darnell is charged with transporting a woman, Miss Ruth Soper, from Okauchon, Mich., to Chicago, and then to Kenosha, Wis., for "immoral purposes."

Darnell, who accepted a pastorate at Kenosha, Wis., last November, stopped at Chicago, met nineteen-year-old Ruth Soper, and married her. He prepared a home for her at Kenosha. In about three weeks another "wife" and baby arrived, this being Ruth Soper, daughter of a Minnesota publisher. Darnell admits that he is the father of her child. Last month the church trustees became suspicious and after an investigation Darnell resigned and left Kenosha at 2 o'clock in the morning. He returned to Chicago, went to the home of Doris Vaughan and there insisted that he had never been married to another woman. But 12th Street Sprague Darnell of Avon, Ill., appeared and showed a marriage certificate and divorce papers. Thereupon Doris Vaughan obtained a divorce.

Then Darnell met Ruth Soper and they tried to obtain licenses to marry in North Dakota and in Minneapolis, but failed. They dropped out of sight until yesterday. It was reported that Darnell obtained a license yesterday at Crown Point, Ind., to marry Ruth Soper.

But the Federal authorities, who have had Darnell followed for ten days, say they found no evidence that he had obtained a license at Crown Point.

The Rev. Leon Harvey, chairman of the national fellowship committee of the Unitarian denomination, said last evening that James M. Darnell had applied for membership in the committee last fall, but had been denied after investigation.

"Nevertheless," said Mr. Harvey, "he went to Kenosha and represented himself as a Unitarian minister with proper credentials."

SQUIRE WHIPS WIFE BEATER.

Pennsylvania Justice Then Sends Him to Jail.

WILKESBARRE, Pa., Feb. 16.—John Kotch, aged 40, who believed that American laws gave him the right to boss his wife, was sent to jail after a different knowledge of the law today, for Justice of the Peace Henry Miller of Swoyersville treated Kotch to a dose of his own medicine.

Mrs. Kotch came to the justice with both eyes trimmed in mourning. She told Miller how she had been beaten and Squire Miller immediately sent a constable in search of her husband.

Kotch appeared before the squire, proud of his ability to beat his wife, and said the laws of this country let me boss women.

Squire Miller told him to get his coat off and then began one of the stiffest fights Miller has ever fought. Kotch fought hard, but two blows on the nose convinced the criminal to flog, which unknocked him. Miller battered his face badly.

Kotch was taken to the jail, and when he agreed to quit beating his wife Squire Miller will free him.

DANBURY HATTERS HEARING.

House Committee to Consider Question of Paying Damages.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.—Chairman Fitzgerald of the House Committee on Appropriations announced today that the committee will give a hearing before the end of the current session on the request that the Government pay the fines and interest, amounting to \$230,000, assessed against the defendants in the Danbury hatters case.

Alton B. Parker of New York will appear to urge favorable action in the case.

Clothing Received for the Prisoners of Poland.

A large box of clothing for the prisoners of Poland was received yesterday by the War Reliance Fund from Mrs. John Hewitt, 8 Broadway avenue, Schenectady, N. Y. E. S. Pittman, Washington, D. C., sent a knitted scarf. These contributions will go with the next shipment to Paris for the relief of needy French families.

Special Panel for Thaw.

A special panel of 200 jurors, from which twelve will be selected to try Harry K. Thaw and his alleged co-conspirators in connection with his escape from Matteawan Insane Asylum, was ordered yesterday by Justice Weeks in the Supreme Court Criminal Term. The panel will be drawn for March 1, at which time Justice Page will be sitting.

Becker Affidavits for Appeals Court.

New Trial Motion Here on Negro's Statements to Open Way.

ROSE GETS PERKINS'S 'NO'.

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Even if the lower court should refuse the application for a new trial a decision would enable the lawyers to bring before the higher court the affidavits on which the motion for a new trial will be made.

Ordinarily such motions are referred to the Justice who tried the case, but as Justice Sweeney, who presided at the second trial of Becker, is now on the Court of Appeals bench the motion will be presented to some other Justice, probably Justice Weeks. It will take the form of a motion, directing the District Attorney to show cause why a new trial should not be granted, and may or may not be supported by the evidence of Marshall himself.

The doubt is injected by that elusive person, "No one interested in the case seemed to be quite sure of him yesterday. But District Attorney Perkins, who holds one of Marshall's conflicting affidavits as to the honesty of his testimony, said he knew Marshall could be reached by him whenever needed."

Mr. Manton said that Marshall had tried to get in touch with him on Monday night, after the negro had gone to Philadelphia, neglecting an appointment which he had with Becker's lawyers and Assistant District Attorney Groen. Mr. Manton did not seem quite sure whether Marshall would be in court when the new trial motion was made.

In reply to Jack Rose's statement that he would be willing to undergo any questioning by the lawyers for the defense, Mr. Manton put forward a challenge which District Attorney Perkins instantly rejected.

"If Jack Rose is willing to submit to an examination by a referee," said Mr. Manton, "and the District Attorney will agree that Rose shall go free of all punishment, and if Rose will tell the truth, Becker will get his new trial."

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Mrs. Frank S. Harnden Says He Made Her Coercive Marriage.

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Mrs. Harnden alleged that for thirteen months after their marriage, on August 1, 1910, the doctor refused to allow her to make public their wedding. When she insisted upon it, she, she charged, he deserted her and they have not lived together since then.

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